

REMARKS

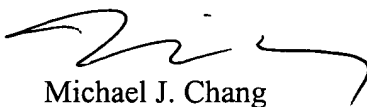
Claims 1-27 are currently pending in the application. In the outstanding Office Action, the Examiner required restriction of the application to one of the following two groups of claims:

5 Group I, including claims 25-26; and Group II, including claims 1-24 and 27. Applicants respectfully traverse the restriction requirement.

Applicants respectfully assert that the restriction requirement is improper and should be withdrawn, since each Group is, for example, generally related to reduced, or reducing, at least one critical dimension of a patterned feature(s), and it is believed that a complete search for each
10 Group would require a search of most, if not all, of the individual classes and subclasses. Accordingly, Applicants submit that an examination of both Groups would not impose a serious burden on the Examiner. Where, as here, "the search and examination of an entire application can be made without serious burden, the Examiner must examine it on the merits, even though it includes claims to independent or distinct inventions." MPEP §803.

15 Accordingly, it is respectfully requested that the restriction requirement be reconsidered and withdrawn and that all of the pending claims in the application be examined together in this application, or alternatively, Applicants hereby elect Group II, that is, claims 1-24 and 27, with traverse, for prosecution in this application.

20 Respectfully submitted,



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